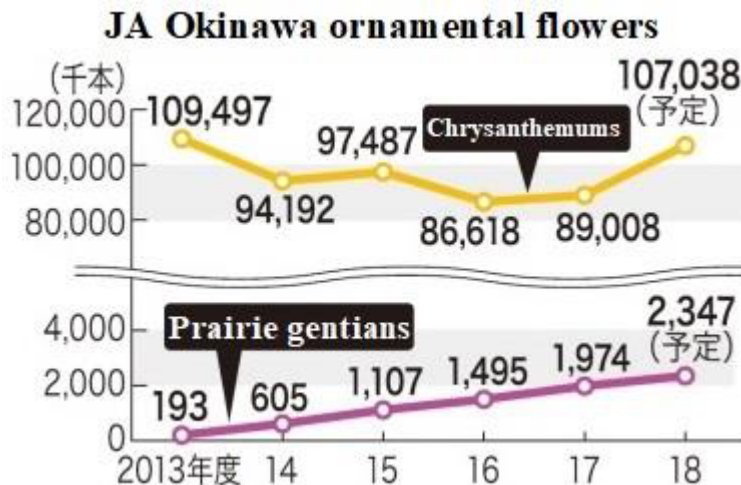


Forecasting an increase in shipment of chrysanthemums JA Okinawa fiscal year 2018 Strong forecast for the *Higan* equinoctial period

On the 17th, JA Okinawa (Tsutomu Oshiro, president) announced the forecast for shipments and sales amounts of chrysanthemums in 2018. The quantity is 107,030,000 flowers, an increase of 20.2% over the previous year, and the sales amount comes to 3,725,640,000 yen, an increase of 31.8%.

For December, the number of chrysanthemums used for New Year's decreased 28% to 16 million flowers due to the influence of Typhoons 24 and 25, but for March, for the equinoctial period when people visit family graves and display chrysanthemums, it is forecasted that it will be 31 million flowers, a 15% increase over the previous year, totaling 556 million yen, which is a 15% increase over the previous year as well. It is predicted that, "Overall it will exceed the previous year."

Small chrysanthemums account for about 60% of JA sales, and the number and sales are the top in the nation. In addition to December shipments for New Year demand and March shipments for the equinoctial period, they have strengthened production efforts from May to September (Summer/Autumn period) aiming for an in-between period outside the prefecture. JA estimates that the pre-set prices and stable supply of seedlings in summer appeared to increase production. A spokesperson said, "We will continue to work on expanding production of ornamental flowers produced in Okinawa prefecture and increasing farmer's income".



The number of farm households involved in growing prairie gentians, and the production volume, positions this as a mainstay of Okinawa prefecture-grown flowers. Full-scale shipments will begin in December, and in fiscal 2018, the volume is expected to increase 18.8% to 2.34 million flowers with a 31.1% increase in value to 333 million yen.